

# Open Research Online

---

The Open University's repository of research publications  
and other research outputs

## Investigation of the dust environment around Europa

### Conference or Workshop Item

#### How to cite:

Miljkovic, Katarina; Mason, Nigel and Zarnecki, John (2009). Investigation of the dust environment around Europa. In: European Planetary Science Congress, 14-18 Sep 2009, Potsdam, Germany.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© 2009 The Authors

Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:

<http://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EPSC2009/EPSC2009-329.pdf>

---

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

---

[oro.open.ac.uk](http://oro.open.ac.uk)

## Investigation of the dust environment around Europa

K. Miljkovic, N.J. Mason and J.C. Zarnecki

The Open University, United Kingdom (k.miljkovic@open.ac.uk)

### Abstract

Space in the vicinity of atmosphereless bodies in the Solar system is often populated by dust originating from the surface. Fragments of the surface are ejected mostly due to hypervelocity meteoroid impacts. It is also possible that material from sub-surface layers may be vented through cracks in the ice (as detected near Enceladus).

The understanding of Europa's dust cloud (and dust clouds of this sort in general) is done by mimicking micrometeoroid impact into simulated European regolith/ice using the light gas gun at the Open University. The research is complemented with impact modelling using the finite element hydrocode, ANSYS Autodyn 3D. The results are implemented in IDL in order to calculate the approximate dust cloud population (size and spatial density) of the surface fragments at different altitudes above Europa's surface.

It is, therefore, investigated whether orbit-based detection and analysis of material ejected from the surface may provide an alternative method for sampling material without landing, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Our current work is aimed at the understanding of the local dust fluxes and geometries at the orbital altitudes and its application to the design of a dust detector for an orbiter.

### References

- [1] Miljkovic, K. et al (2007) Research on Europa's dust cloud at The Open University's HVI Laboratory, *26<sup>th</sup> ISTS proc.*
- [2] Grün, E. et al. (1997) Dust measurements in the Jovian magnetosphere, *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 24.
- [3] Holmquist, T.J. et al. (1995) High strain rate properties and constitutive modeling of glass, *15<sup>th</sup> International symposium on ballistics*, 1995.
- [6] Melosh, H.J. (1989) Impact cratering. A geological process, Oxford university press.
- [4] Divine, N. (1993), Five populations of Interplanetary Meteoroids, *JGR.*, 98.
- [5] Koschny, D and Grün, E (2001) Impacts into Ice-Silicate Mixtures: Crater morphologies, Volumes, Depth-to-Diameter Ratios, and Yield, *Icarus*, 154.
- [6] Krüger, H. et al. (2003) Impact-generated Dust Clouds Surrounding the Galilean Moons, *Icarus*, 164.